



12 Courtenay Hill, Newry, Co Down, BT34 2EA
Phone: (028) 3026 2175

22 June 2020

Dear Parents, please see below a copy of a letter prepared by all local Principals:

A group of Principals, from our local schools, met recently to discuss the implications of the DE publication, 'Northern Ireland Re-opening School Guidance: New School Day', which was issued late on the afternoon of Friday 19 June 2020.

After prolonged discussion, and with due regard to **current** guidance, principals reached the following decisions to help us move forward during the continuing uncertainty:

- Schools in our area will reopen on Monday 24th August for an induction week which will focus on helping our pupils settle back into the new school day and adapted environment. Your child(ren) will attend for part of the week and specific dates and times will be provided by your child(ren)'s school in due course. This initial week will be morning sessions only with children returning home for lunch.
- Various options for re-opening are being discussed and explored. Schools will communicate with you their most viable options based on their physical capacity, pupil numbers and availability of staff. However, principals are acutely aware that the situation may change significantly over the summer, if for instance, social distancing requirements are removed altogether, resulting in options being amended and revised.
- Arrangements regarding staggered pupil arrivals and collections may be necessary and details will be communicated to you on an individual school basis.
- All parents will be required to remain outside the school buildings, unless specifically requested to enter.
- Pupils are asked to wear a fresh school uniform every day. This may alternate between formal uniform and their school tracksuit. Please encourage your child to change out of their uniform immediately on their arrival home.
- School bags or other items from home should not be brought into school. Packed lunches should be in disposable packaging.
- No guidance has yet been issued to schools regarding Nursery provision, transport or school meals. Details will follow as soon as they are known.
- Please continue to reinforce the practice of thorough and regular handwashing, appropriate social distancing, along with 'Catch it, Bin it, Kill it'. Our school will further reinforce these practices by having clear policy and procedures in place when your child returns. Please talk to your child about 1 metre social distancing.
- Our school will continue to furnish you with updated information. It is essential that you access and follow school communications e.g. Website, school app etc. **This is your responsibility.** Please ensure that you regularly access the platforms employed by your child(ren)'s school.

Please be aware that this information is subject to change in light of evolving DE Guidance.

Our sincere hope is for a full return in September if guidance allows. We will strive to keep you fully informed of any relevant developments and we deeply appreciate your continued support throughout this difficult time.

We look forward to welcoming you all back to our schools in a safe and ready environment.

Yours faithfully

Newry Area Primary Principals